
KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
DIRECTOR'S REGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ADVISORY GROUP

Capital Plaza Hotel
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Meeting Minutes

Saturday, May 22, 2010

Members in Attendance:

BG John W. Heltzel, Director	Kentucky Emergency Management
Jim Aponte, Search and Rescue	Trimble County
Jim Moss, Search and Rescue	Fulton County
Shawn Herron, Search and Rescue	Madison County
Mike Buresh, Search and Rescue	Fayette County
Jerry Rains, Region 9	Kentucky Emergency Management
Dale Appel, Search and Rescue	Boone County
Clay Corbett, Search and Rescue	Floyd County
Tim Cooley, Search and Rescue	Floyd County
Charlie O'Neal, Deputy Director	Kentucky Emergency Management
Randy Graham, Search and Rescue	Christian County
Chris Hecker, Region 8	Kentucky Emergency Management
James Allen, Search and Rescue	Floyd County
Robert McCool, Search and Rescue	Madison County

Absent:

Don Franklin, Region 10	Kentucky Emergency Management
Vicki Martin, Region 2	Kentucky Emergency Management
Mark Garland, Region 1	Kentucky Emergency Management
Kevin Devine, Search and Rescue	Washington County
Mike Rupard, Trench Search and Rescue	Jessamine County
Rudy Young, Search and Rescue	McCreary County
Mike Matney, Search and Rescue	Green County
Carl Alexander, Canine Search and Rescue	Calloway County
Alex Hyrcza, Search and Rescue	Bracken County
Greg Bayer, Lexington Fire Department	Fayette County
Tony Richey, Director, Search and Rescue	Barren County
Paul Coomer, Search and Rescue	Pulaski County
Cletus Smith, Canine Search and Rescue	Jessamine County
Paul Wilson, Search and Rescue	Bell County
Paul Miles, Search and Rescue	Letcher County
Travis Bell, SwiftWater Search and Rescue	Jefferson County
Gary Fancher, Region 3	Kentucky Emergency Management
David Frost, Search and Rescue	Wayne County
Ronnie Pearson, Director, Search and Rescue	Warren County

KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DIRECTOR'S REGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ADVISORY GROUP

Guests:

George Griffith, with Jim Aponte

Staff:

Terry Varney, Training & Exercise
Tim Hazlette, SAR
Tonya Coleman

Kentucky Emergency Management
Kentucky Emergency Management
Kentucky Emergency Management

Observers:

Norm Lawson

Legislative Research Commission

The Directors Search and Rescue Advisory Group (DSAR AG) met for the fifth time on Saturday May 22, 2010 beginning at 10:00 AM at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Frankfort, KY. Director Heltzel opened the meeting by introducing the newly hired Search and Rescue Program Administrative Coordinator. Additionally, Director Heltzel recognized the efforts of the Boone County Rescue Squad and Dale Appel for their actions during the recent flooding in the Commonwealth. Moreover, it was noted that the flooding issues contributed to the many absences of members.

Director Heltzel conveyed to the group that training classes are progressing well, the course evaluations reflect good instruction and overall our instructors are doing an excellent job. The Director also expressed his intent to attend more classes in the future as his schedule permits.

Director Heltzel stated the meeting would focus on the Commonwealth Search and Rescue Games (CSARG) to determine if we as a group wanted to continue them or not. Director Heltzel further added his consideration of placing a SAR representative on either the Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board (KCCRB) or the Commonwealth Emergency Response Commission (CERC).

The first item of business was a presentation of a newly developed training program by James Allen – Floyd County Emergency Rescue Squad (FCERS). The training is focused on Rescue Extraction and is developed in compliance with NFPA 1600 standards. It consists of four levels; 1. Awareness; 2. Operator; 3. Technician; and 4. Specialist. This training is designed to be completed in phases over a four week time period. A training packet was presented to Director Heltzel for review and a copy was presented to Mr. Robert McCool for review, evaluation and critique.

The next agenda item addressed instructors. The group discussion focused on a method to identify, evaluate and credential instructors to competently teach KYEM sponsored courses. Specifically, it is intended that any instructor of a course must first attend the subject course they wish (intend) to instruct and then assist with a minimum of two classes taught by a senior/lead instructor. After at least two classes have been monitored by the prospective instructor, the senior/lead instructor will evaluate the student instructor for final consideration to become a lead instructor. Current instructors may have the option to “grandfather” into the new

KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DIRECTOR'S REGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ADVISORY GROUP

instructor certification program by demonstrating a minimum of five years experience in addition to other criteria. Consideration may be given to substitute certain required preparatory course work if the instructor is able to demonstrate and document relevant experience, skills, and abilities

Moreover, training aides in the form of equipment available from KYEM was discussed. Currently, KYEM has two SAR training trailers equipped with instructional aides to assist with SAR Classes – which may be loaned. Director Heltzel discussed the continued relationship development with KCTCS and the benefits to KYEM – especially SAR related issues. KCTCS is in a position to support SAR training with equipment and other resources. As an extension of the training discussion, Mr. McCool suggested the practicality and utility of exploring the possibility of partnering with vendors to provide specific training tools for classes – which would also serve as an advertising venue for them (vendors). Mr. Moss further suggested the development of a vendor pool which could be contacted to participate in certain classes/courses. Ms. Herron commented that the establishment of advanced scheduling would be of great value to vendors wishing to participate.

Mr. Cooley shared the intend of KCTCS to explore the development of a curriculum to establish a degree program in Rescue Extraction, Search and Rescue, Man Tracking, Managing Search Operations, etc. KCTCS is investigating the availability of grants to offer scholarships which provides this education free of charge to student volunteers. It was further stated by Mr. McCool and Ms. Herron of the likelihood of matching course content of SAR classes to available college courses in order to establish college credit.

The next item discussed addressed the use of forms and information management. Clay Corbett expressed his belief that some information is being duplicated between KYEM and KCTCS. Mr. Corbett suggested the combining of as many of these forms/documents as possible – or at least “cross recognize” the form as acceptable between agencies to reduce paperwork by instructors. Director Heltzel interjected his goal for KYEM to strive for electronic forms and files – specifically related to course registration, class rosters, and course evaluations. Director Heltzel went on to state the goal to build a group of links and tools on the website to help accomplish this.

Region 9 Manager Jerry Raines inquired about how the group believed was the best method to track missing person incidents which are still classified as “open”. Ms. Herron and Mr. Raines continued in the discussion by stating the need for law enforcement officers to receive Basic Search and Rescue (BSAR) training and how the absence of this training often limits the officers’ ability to assist during a search mission. Specifically, it was suggested the target group of officers should minimally include Park Rangers, Correctional Officers and Conservation Officers. Mr. McCool recommended that the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council (KLEC) should be approached with a request to approve the BSAR curriculum for law enforcement. Following the discussion, Director Heltzel suggested that the CERC may serve as a coordination group to “cross-credential” certain classes used by multiple agencies and disciplines such as fire, police, and EMS.

KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DIRECTOR'S REGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ADVISORY GROUP

The next item advanced for discussion was reiterated by Director Heltzel of the need for a training structure – to include steps of progression toward credentialing. Particular questions which need further examination are; What is the follow-up protocol for those who drop out of a class? What are the mechanisms for tracking absences and how are those applied to future eligibility? In response, Mr. McCool offered a suggestion to insert a “Warning Statement” that articulates the consequences of not completing a course. Mr. Moss reiterated the need for closer examination of registration forms from students – as well as instructor applications – to make sure they include recommendations or endorsements of the County Emergency Management Director and others deemed appropriate. In addition, Mr. Buresh recommended consideration of establishing a course fee of \$10.00 per student to create better commitment for the course and to assist with the cost of materials. Mr. Buresh also offered the notion of establishing an instructor ladder beginning with a BSAR Instructor certificate, continuing with a Man Tracking Instructor Certificate, followed by a Managing Search Operations Instructor certificate. Each of these would require demonstrated ability in addition to the requisite Incident Command System (ICS) classes. Mr. Buresh stated he believed there to be only four Man Tracking Instructors in Kentucky. Mr. McCool continued the discussion by suggesting consideration should be given to adopting a Professional Development Certification issued by FEMA. Director Heltzel commented on his desire to institute a method of recognition for the achievement of instructor status such as a patch or pin. Ms. Herron and Mr. McCool went on to comment about other ways to recognize instructor achievements such as articles in the KYEM publication or features on the KYEM webpage.

Director Heltzel stated his desire for each member of DSAR AG to be registered for a log-in to the www.kyemweb.com.

In an effort to better publicize the contributions and efforts of KYEM, Ms. Herron suggested the issuance of press releases to the local newspapers of each student completing a SAR course.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM for lunch and was reconvened at 12:45 PM.

Upon return, Dale Appel from the Boone County Rescue Squad presented to the group the status of the Swift Water Training course developed by his squad. The course is designed for established dive teams and provides for the creation of a safe and certified team. This form of SAR has been difficult to generate interest among other counties due to the financial demands for equipping and training members. Mr. Appel stated a standardized criterion for dive teams needs to be established but not in a way to penalize currently functioning teams. Mr. Appel also stated there was a need for better commitment from the dive industry for instructor training. Mr. Appel stated it costs approximately \$1500.00 per person to equip as a diver. Director Heltzel reinforced the need to survey SAR squads to determine the number of divers in Kentucky. From that group assist with the attainment of Professional Association of Dive Instructors (PADI) Certification to expand the number from three squads currently operating within Kentucky. Mr. Appel stated the standards used by Indiana are the most common protocol for divers than any other he is familiar with. Continuing in the discussion, Mr. Buresh asked how that land SAR units can best assist water SAR units. Director Heltzel responded by emphasizing the need for

KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DIRECTOR'S REGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ADVISORY GROUP

more squads to complete the Moving Water Rescue Awareness (MWRA) course to better understand water rescue.

The next topic discussed was the Commonwealth Search and Rescue Games (CSARG) and how often to hold them. The intended purpose for the CSARG is to build camaraderie and encourage involvement. However, if the DSARAG believes this to not be the best venue to accomplish this purpose, the floor was opened for other ideas. Mr. Norman Lawson suggested the re-establishment of regional training exercises which had been successful in past years. In previous years Fish and Wildlife Conservation Camps were utilized for this purpose and were staffed by KYEM personnel and volunteers. Mr. Aponte commented that many times there has been a Kentucky – Indiana SAR conference. Mr. McCool suggested the support for a state SAR school (much like the state fire school) which could operate on a regional basis to attract more participation. In addition, a “town hall” meeting could be incorporated into the exercise by KYEM to brief squads on current events, present new training information and other useful exchanges of information. Mr. Lawson stated a small fee could be charged to cover expenses and meals. Mr. Aponte recommended the mixing of team members during exercises to build cooperation among members and teams. Mr. Appel referred to the Rescue School at Eastern Kentucky University stating that KYEM once funded this and it served as host to a SAR school. This year the Rescue School is scheduled to be held in Somerset October 22-24. Next year it is tentatively scheduled to be held in Floyd County. Mr. Appel believes the ECU Rescue School could serve as a means to accomplish the mission of DSARAG; serve as a catalyst to get various groups together on common issues; and create better communication within the SAR community. Director Heltzel commented on his belief for the need to advertise and market SAR events better than is currently being done.

Director Heltzel also directed the collection of information on all Rescue Squads over the next 60 days to determine; 1. Number of Active Squads; 2. Capabilities; 3. Squad Profiles; and 4. Equipment inventory. This information will serve to better prepare the state to plan and deploy resources. Mr. Lawson posed the question of who performs search and rescue functions with regard to grant eligibility. Many times that function rests with a fire or law enforcement agency, however, Mr. Lawson referred to KRS 39 and the requirements for rescue squads. Ms. Herron stated in many instances an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) has been given a delegated authority for patient extraction (rescue) – particularly in automobile collisions.

With regard to rescue squad capabilities, Mr. Raines stated he has developed an inspection/audit method to verify rescue squad training and equipment for KYEM Region 9. Mr. Raines maintains the best solution is for KYEM personnel to personally assess each squad. Ms. Herron stated she has developed a draft document to survey rescue squads for the purpose of capturing individual squad equipment and capabilities.

Director Heltzel began closing the meeting at 3:00 PM by announcing the next DSARAG meeting dates as Friday August 27 in Hazard, followed by the next quarterly meeting in Somerset on Saturday October 23.

KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DIRECTOR'S REGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ADVISORY GROUP

In closing the following observations were shared by members of DSARAG;

- Mr. Aponte: recommends the state to voice a policy on SAR responsibility and the need for law enforcement officers to obtain SAR training.
- Mr. Lawson: offer presentations at conferences around the state to other agencies to highlight SAR disciplines.
- Mr. Moss: re-emphasize the need for instructor credentialing; criteria for grandfathering instructors; and a method for equipment inventory.
- Ms. Herron: suggested a rescue squad section in the PROTECTOR newsletter to highlight SAR activities, serve as a method to keep local squads better informed. Mr. Lawson also added this should include fire and police agencies on the distribution list.
- Mr. Raines: suggested attendance by KYEM Regional Response Managers at local training sessions to help build rapport. Also suggested including information highlighting Missing Persons on the KYEM website.
- Mr. Corbett: reminded the group of the need to obtain an incident number for training exercises – for each course taught. This serves to increase communications among all agencies and establishes local communication with the EOC.
- Mr. Cooley: announced that the Floyd County Emergency Rescue Squad has recently become a recognized dealer of rescue equipment by some manufacturers/vendors. Since FCERS is a non-profit organization, it agrees to sell to squads and individual SAR personnel at dealer cost. The intent is to provide as much savings to rescue personnel as possible.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

These minutes are presented for review and are in draft form until the next DSAR-AG meeting when they will be voted on by the board and receive final approval.

Prepared by:
Tim Hazlette
Search & Rescue Program

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